

## Maryland Healthy Housing Fact Sheet

The home is the most dangerous place for U.S. families.<sup>i</sup> Nearly six million families live in housing rivaling that of developing countries, with broken heating and plumbing, holes in walls and windows, roach and rodent infestation, falling plaster, crumbling foundations, and leaking roofs. Millions more in all 50 states live in housing with serious health and safety hazards, including mold, exposed wiring, radon, unvented heaters, toxic chemicals, broken stairs, missing smoke detectors, and other hazards.<sup>ii</sup> Home-based interventions to address health hazards improve health and have a large return on investment: Each dollar invested in lead paint hazard control results in a return of \$17 to \$221,<sup>iii</sup> and each dollar invested in asthma home-based interventions that include education and remediation results in a return of \$5.30 to \$14.00.<sup>iv</sup>

### The need in Maryland

Thirty-seven percent of children in Maryland live in households with high housing cost burden, and 14% of children in Maryland live in poverty.<sup>v</sup> The potential effect of high housing cost burden and poverty on children and families is exacerbated by the age of Maryland's housing stock. Nearly 60% of Maryland's homes were built prior to 1980 (12.8% are pre-1940) and likely to contain lead-based paint.<sup>vi, vii</sup> Unhealthy conditions found in hazardous housing can lead to lead poisoning, injuries, and asthma and other respiratory problems, in turn resulting in missed school days and poor school performance for children, as well as missed work days for parents.

### The need for funding

To protect the health of Maryland families and prevent continued increases in associated healthcare costs and societal consequences, full funding in FY 2016 and beyond is needed for the following:

- ✓ **CDC's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program = \$29,257,000**
- ✓ **CDC's National Asthma Control Program = \$30,596,000**
- ✓ **HUD's Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes = \$120,000,000**

### Funding for healthy housing in Maryland

- Since 1999, eligible cities, counties, and qualifying nonprofits in Maryland have received 37 grants for a total of \$52,933,738 in funding from HUD's Office Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes for lead hazard reduction, healthy homes production, and education and outreach activities. From this total, \$498,517 was awarded to Quantech, Inc. in 2014.<sup>viii</sup>
- Maryland has received a total of \$10,422,384 in funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention and National Asthma Control programs from FY05 – FY14. Of this funding:
  - The Maryland Department of the Environment has received a total of \$7,006,833 from the Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.
  - The Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has received a total of \$3,415,551 in funding for asthma-related activities, most recently \$18,460 for surveillance activities in FY14.

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- Although originally funded in 2001, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is not currently funded by CDC's National Asthma Control Program.<sup>ix</sup>

### **Childhood lead poisoning<sup>x</sup>**

- In 2013, 2,848 of the children tested in Maryland had an elevated blood lead level, which is five or more micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ); 353 of them had blood lead levels of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  or more.

### **Asthma**

- In 2010, approximately 11.9% of Maryland children (over 150,000) had current asthma; 8.5% of adults had current asthma in 2011.<sup>xi</sup>
- Between 2007 and 2009, current asthma prevalence was significantly higher for black non-Hispanic children (14.9%) compared to white non-Hispanic children (7.5%).<sup>xii</sup>
- In 2009, Maryland experienced 39,834 asthma-related emergency department visits and 11,474 asthma hospitalizations which totaled over \$26 million and \$73 million respectively.<sup>xiii</sup>

### **Radon**

- Eight counties in Maryland have an average indoor screening level greater than 4 pCi/L, meaning they are in a "red zone" or have high radon levels. Seven counties and Baltimore City have an average indoor screening level between 2 and 4 pCi/L, qualifying them at moderate levels of radon.<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Carbon monoxide deaths**

- There were 84 deaths due to carbon monoxide exposure from 2000 to 2007 in Maryland.<sup>xv</sup>

### **Injury-related deaths**

- For every 100,000 persons in Maryland, there were 19.88 unintentional injury deaths caused by dangers other than automobile-related issues.<sup>xvi</sup>

### **National rankings**

- NCHH's 2013 *State of Healthy Housing* report ranks 45 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) according to healthy housing related data in the American Housing Survey. The state of Maryland has two MSAs included in this report. The Washington, DC area was tied for 16th, and Baltimore is tied for 34th; both are categorized as having "fair" healthy housing characteristics.<sup>xvii</sup>
- The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America's listing of "Asthma Capitals" for 2014 ranks the 100 largest U.S. metro areas to identify the "most challenging places to live with asthma." The state of Maryland has one city identified in this listing: Baltimore is ranked as the 53rd "most challenging" place to live with asthma.<sup>xviii</sup>

### **Healthcare financing for healthy homes<sup>xix, xx</sup>**

The National Center for Healthy Housing's November 2014 [study](#) regarding state Medicaid reimbursement policies for environmental health services in the homes of people with asthma and children exposed to lead shows that in [Maryland](#) some level of Medicaid reimbursement is in place for

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activities related to lead; and although no reimbursement for services related to asthma are in place currently, efforts are underway to explore the possibility of adding these services.<sup>1</sup>

Opportunities for Maryland to improve reimbursement of environmental health services further include:

- Effecting coverage for home-based asthma services that address environmental triggers in the home environment.
- Ensuring that services and supports are included to eliminate or reduce exposure to asthma triggers or lead hazards identified in the home environment.
- Ensuring that the eligibility criteria for lead-poisoning follow-up services in Maryland is aligned with the current CDC reference value for lead poisoning (5 µg/dL).

### For additional information, please contact:

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<sup>1</sup> Note: (a) These are self-reported results that have not been independently verified, and (b) the existence of a policy does NOT mean that services are actually being delivered on the ground.